This Monster Wants to Eat Me

2

Sai Naekawa

Contents

Chapter 5	Sea of Hope	003
Chapter 6	That Which Changes, That Which Doesn't	039
Chapter 7	Memories of You by My Side	063
Chapter 8	Ephemeral Bond	091
Chapter 9	What Remains of a Prayer Is a Promise	119
	Bonus Comic	154
	Afterword	160

CHAPTER 5

I'VE BEEN WONDERING FOR A WHILE, ACTUALLY—

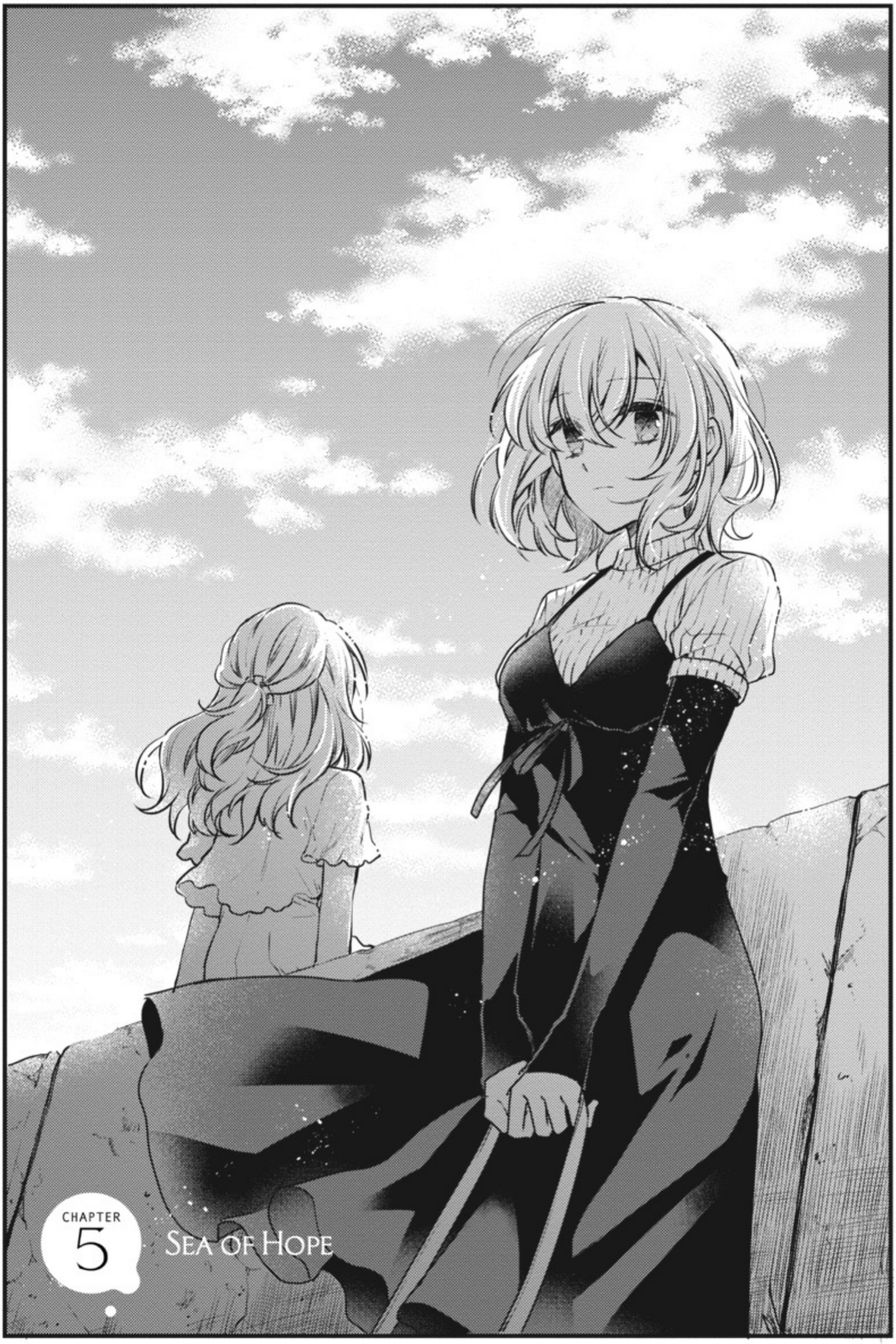
ZAAAAA (WHOOSH)

ぎゅっ…

GIRI (SQUEEZE)

WHAT...

...HAS YOU IN SUCH A HURRY TO DIE?


CHAPTER
5
Sea of Hope

ZAAA
(WHOOSH)

.....!

NIKO

NIKO
(SMILE)

NO, I WON'T HEAR A WORD OF THAT.

GUI
(PULL)

I DON'T...

"I DON'T WANT TO DIE"? HMM?

—WHILE IT'S TRUE THAT YOUR DELECTABLE FLESH PUTS THAT OF OTHER HUMANS TO SHAME...

GYO (SHOCK)

ギョッ

...!?

SUN (SNIFF)

スン

？

YOU REEK LIKE A BEACHED, ROTTING WHALE.

...IF I MAY BE SO BOLD—

A WHALE...?

...!

AND GET OFF ME...

.....
UM...

I THINK CALLING ME A ROTTING WHALE WAS A BIT TOO FAR...

HINAKO, DID YOU KNOW...

SOME WOULD SAY MEAT ON THE VERGE OF SPOILING IS THE TASTIEST THERE IS, BUT...

...AS YOU CAN SEE, I'M SOMEWHAT OF A GOURMET.

...THAT HUMANS WHO CRAVE DEATH OFTEN HAVE THE SAME ODOR TO THEM?

SURU (SLIDE)

AND THAT'S HARDLY THE ONLY EVIDENCE.

...

WHEN THAT ISO-ONNA ATTACKED YOU THE OTHER DAY...

HUP!

...YOU SEEMED SURPRISED, YES, BUT YOU MADE NO ATTEMPT TO RESIST.

KOTSU

AND WITH EVERY REMARK I MAKE ABOUT DEVOURING YOU—

KOTSU (CLACK)

WHY, YOU LOOK AS IF YOU YEARN FOR SUCH A THING.

KOKI (POP)

—IT'S UNCANNY.

ZA (FSSH)

ZA

ZA

ZAN

ZA

ZA

HER EYES ARE...

TELL ME— WHY IS THAT?

...JUST LIKE THE SEA.

?

YOU REMIND ME OF THE OCEAN I SAW AS A CHILD.

HOW DO YOU MEAN...?

...I'VE THOUGHT THAT...

...EVER SINCE THE MOMENT WE MET.

THE OCEAN ...

GYU (TUG)

...THAT SWALLOWED UP MY FAMILY— BURNING CAR AND ALL.

YOU'RE SO FREAKISHLY SIMILAR TO THOSE DARK WATERS, IT SCARES ME.

ZAZAN (FSSSH)

ZA

ZAN

—WHEN I WAS SIX...

...MY WHOLE FAMILY DIED.

WE HAD JUST GONE ON OUR FIRST FAMILY TRIP.

IT WAS ON THE DRIVE BACK—

...M...

MOMMY...!

ZURI (SKFF)

ズ!!

ZU

ズ!!

DADDY...

ONII... CHAN...

ZURI

ズ!!

IT WAS OVER IN AN INSTANT.

I WAS THROWN FROM THE CAR AS IT WENT OVER THE CLIFF. ONLY ME.

WHEN I CAME TO, MY MOM, DAD, AND BROTHER WERE STILL TRAPPED INSIDE AS IT BURNED IN THE WATER BELOW.

I COULDN'T DO A THING TO HELP THEM...

...BACK THEN...

...I COULD'VE BEEN WITH THEM.....

I WISH...

IF I'D CRAWLED, I COULD'VE DROPPED INTO THE INKY BRINE WITH MY FAMILY.

IT WAS ONLY A FEW METERS.

GET THIS—

I HEARD SOMETHING.

BUT...

GIRI (CLENCH)

A VOICE THAT SAID, "HINAKO. YOU HAVE TO SURVIVE"...

MAYBE IT WAS JUST MY IMAGINATION.

AFTER ALL, HOW COULD A VOICE HAVE REACHED ME FROM THE FLAMING WRECKAGE?

STILL, I KNOW I HEARD IT.

I DISTINCTLY REMEMBER IT.

—SO EVEN THOUGH...

...I'M SO FULL OF SORROW THAT I WANT TO GIVE UP...

...I HAVE TO JUST GRIT MY TEETH AND PUSH ON.

I HAVE TO—

—...

FOR MY FAMILY.

.....
HINA—

THAT WAS WHEN...

...YOU SHOWED UP.

.....

WHAT I ALWAYS WISHED FOR.

ZAAA (WHOOSH)

...ME?

ONE THAT MERE HUMANS CANNOT RESIST...

...LIKE THE SEA THAT SWALLOWED MY FAMILY...

TON (TMP)

...THAT WOULD SNUFF OUT MY LIFE, BEYOND A SHADOW OF A DOUBT.

A CRUEL ...

...YET GENTLE FORCE.

CAPABLE OF GRANTING DEATH OR MERCY ON A WHIM.

...I SEE.

...COUNT YOUR SURVIVAL...

...AS A SIGN OF GOOD FORTUNE?

DID YOU NOT...

GOSHI (RUB)

ごしっ

!

YOU THINK AFTER HAVING EVERYONE I CARED ABOUT SNATCHED AWAY IN AN INSTANT...

...I CAN JUST GO, "YAY, I LIVED! I MUST BE THE LUCKIEST GIRL IN THE WORLD!"?

.....

...YOU REALLY ARE...

...I CERTAINLY WOULD, YES!

WELL...

NIKOOO (SMILE)

にこっ

...A MONSTER.

AFTER THIS CHAT, I FEEL AS THOUGH I TRULY UNDERSTAND YOU!

ISN'T IT WONDERFUL TO FORGE STRONGER BONDS OF FRIENDSHIP WITH ONE ANOTHER?

PAA (BEAM)

I HAVE ONLY ONE PIECE OF ADVICE—

SO YOU WISH TO DIE YET DARE NOT STATE IT ALOUD?

HOW POSITIVELY HUMAN OF YOU.

JUST AS YOUR DEARLY DEPARTED FAMILY WISHED...

...PLEASE LIVE OUT YOUR DAYS IN GOOD HEALTH.

AND ONCE YOU'VE DISCOVERED WHAT JOY AND HOPE THERE IS TO BE HAD—

ONCE YOU'RE DETERMINED TO TAKE HOLD OF LIFE, WITHOUT CONSIDERING DEATH ANY FURTHER...

...BUT I—

TAKE IN WHAT LIFE HAS TO OFFER BEYOND GRIEF.

SHOULD YOU DO SO...

...YOU WILL FIND PEACE WITH THE PASSAGE OF TIME.

...I'LL BE THERE TO DEVOUR YOU UNTIL NOTHING REMAINS.

GET IT NOW, HINAKO?

IF YOU ARE THAT DESPERATE TO BECOME MY MEAL...

...MAKE MORE OF AN EFFORT TO LIVE WITH JOY IN YOUR HEART.

NIKO (SMILE)

にこっ。

WORK HARD AT LIVING...IN ORDER TO DIE?

WHAT'S WITH THAT?

.....

I WOULD SAY OUR INTERESTS ARE ALIGNED, NO?

WE CAN BOTH GET WHAT WE WANT. BUT THAT DEPENDS ON YOU, HINAKO.

...PUTTING THE WHOLE THING ON ME, HUH?

SHIORI-SAN.

.....

I HAVE HIGH HOPES FOR YOU!

HERE, YOUR BAG.

HEH HEH.

THAT WON'T HAPPEN.

...JUST KNOW...

...THAT IF SOMETHING MEANER AND NASTIER THAN YOU CRAWLS ALONG...

...I MIGHT JUST LET IT GOBBLE ME UP BEFORE YOU GET THE CHANCE.

.....

NO MATTER THE MONSTER ...

...I WON'T LET THEM HAVE A FINGER FROM YOU.

OH, THE NIGHT MAR-KET!

LET'S STOP BY AND SEE IF THEY'RE STILL OPEN!

HUH!?

WE'RE BOTH KINDA COVERED IN BLOOD...

CAN WE REALLY GO LIKE THIS...?

MONSTER BLOOD, YES, WHICH IS INVISIBLE TO ORDINARY HUMANS.

AND BESIDES, IT SHOULD TURN TO DUST IN A MOMENT.

KUI (TUG)

LIVE... WITH JOY IN MY HEART, HUH...?

ONII-CHAN...

MOM...

DAD...

I'LL GIVE IT MY BEST SHOT.

WHAT'LL YOU HAVE?

...SO I'LL SMILE AND CARRY ON, EVEN IN THE DEPTHS OF THE SEA OF HELL.

I CAN HARDLY WAIT TO JOIN YOU ALL...

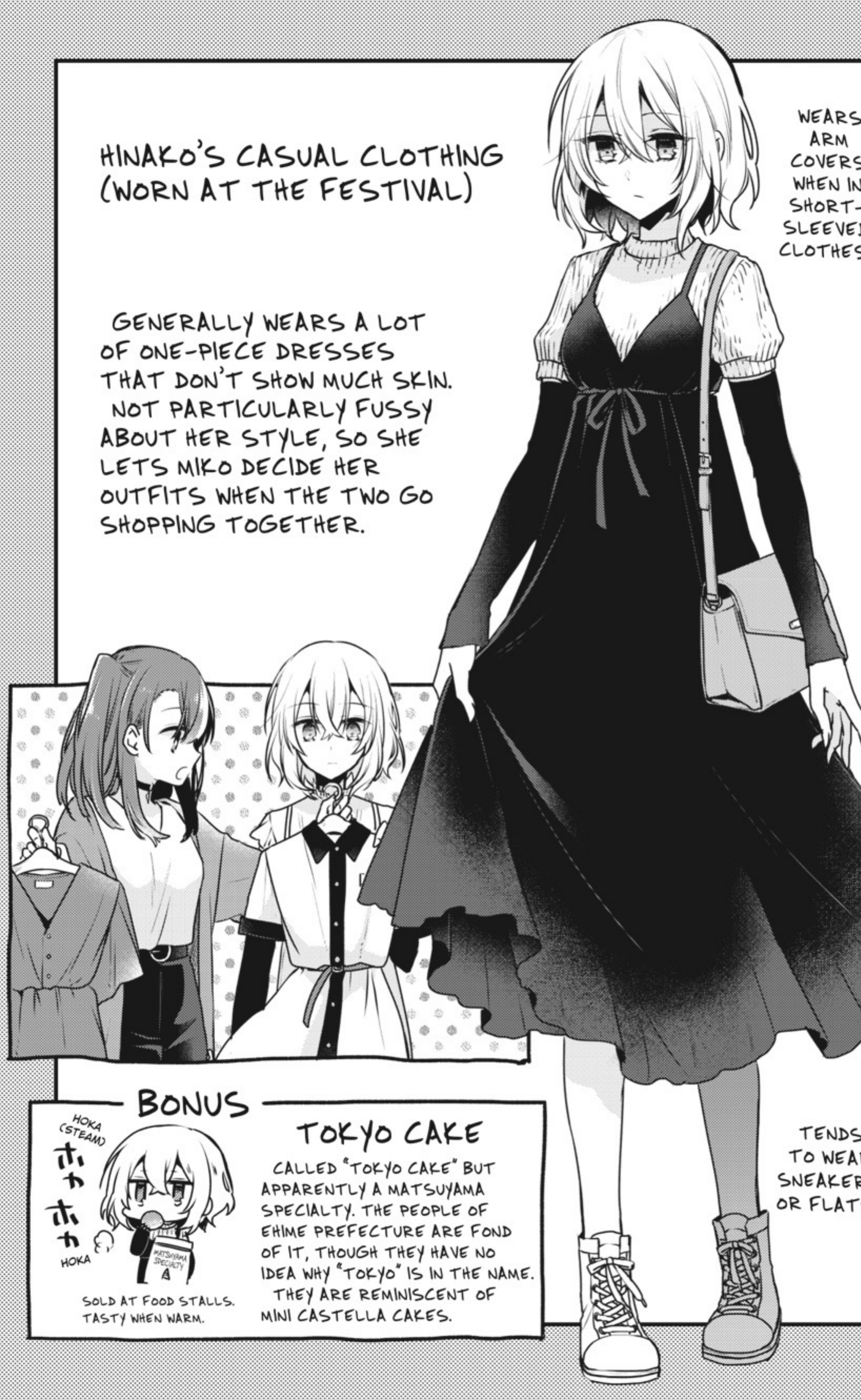
AWW...
MOST OF THE STALLS HAVE ALREADY CLOSED.
WE CAN STILL GET TOKYO CAKES...
WHAT ARE THOSE?
TOKYO CAKE
MATSUYAMA SPECIALTY
FRENCH FRIES
KINDA LIKE...MINI CASTELLA CAKES?
HOW DOES "TOKYO" FIGURE IN?

HINAKO?

HWUH...?
2ND PLACE

HINAKO'S CASUAL CLOTHING (WORN AT THE FESTIVAL)

GENERALLY WEARS A LOT OF ONE-PIECE DRESSES THAT DON'T SHOW MUCH SKIN.
NOT PARTICULARLY FUSSY ABOUT HER STYLE, SO SHE LETS MIKO DECIDE HER OUTFITS WHEN THE TWO GO SHOPPING TOGETHER.



WEARS ARM COVERS WHEN IN SHORT-SLEEVED CLOTHES.

TENDS TO WEAR SNEAKERS OR FLATS.

BONUS

TOKYO CAKE

SOLD AT FOOD STALLS. TASTY WHEN WARM.

CALLED "TOKYO CAKE" BUT APPARENTLY A MATSUYAMA SPECIALTY. THE PEOPLE OF EHIME PREFECTURE ARE FOND OF IT, THOUGH THEY HAVE NO IDEA WHY "TOKYO" IS IN THE NAME.
THEY ARE REMINISCENT OF MINI CASTELLA CAKES.

CHAPTER 6

IF YOU ARE THAT DESPERATE TO BECOME MY MEAL...

CHUN

CHUN (CHRP)

...MAKE MORE OF AN EFFORT TO LIVE WITH JOY IN YOUR HEART.

CHAPTER 6

That Which Changes, That Which Doesn't

—…

WELL, I'M OFF.

ZA (FSSH)

UP UNTIL YESTERDAY, THE WAVES WERE JUST NOISY CHAOS TO ME...

...AND THE SUMMER SUN WAS NO MORE THAN A PAINFUL ANNOY-ANCE...

ZAN

MIIIN

...IT'S ODD.

MIIIN (BUZZ)

MIIIN

...BUT SOMEHOW A FEW WORDS FROM HER...

...WERE ENOUGH TO TOTALLY CHANGE MY POINT OF VIEW...

!

JI (BZ)

MIIIN (BUZZ)

JI JI JI

MIIIN

MORNING, MIKO-CHAN.

LOOK AT THAT! I BEAT YOU HERE TODAY.

MORNIN', HINAKO!

!

AND HEY— YOU SEEM PRETTY CHEERFUL YOURSELF, HINAKO.

DIDJA GET SOME GOOD NEWS OR WHAT?

MIIIN

MIIIN

MIIIN

MIIIN

LOOKS LIKE YOU'RE FEELING BETTER.

I MEAN, LYING SICK IN BED EVERY DAY'S NO WAY TO LIVE!

OH!

UM, OKAY... THAT'S KIND OF CRYPTIC, GIRL.....

.....HMM. MAYBE?

IT'S NOTHING, REALLY.

AWW

ZAZAN (FSSSH)

I GOTTA KNOW!

C'MON ALREADY!! TELL ME WHAT YOUR DEAL IS!!

THAT REMINDS MEEE...

MIIIN (BUZZ)

JI (BZ)

MIIIN

JI

JI

JI

JI

...HUH?

DIDJA CATCH THE FIRE-WORKS?

COULD SHE HAVE...

YOU MEAN LIKE...

...AT THE FESTIVAL.....?

GYU (CLENCH)

ERM...

...SPOTTED ME AND SHIORI-SAN...

...WHILE WE WERE THERE TOGETH-ER...?

—...

MY... PLACE?

PAA (BEAM)

YUP, YUP!

YOU SAID YOU'D BE ABLE TO SEE THEM FROM THE SECOND-FLOOR WINDOW AT YOUR PLACE, RIGHT?

GAAAN (SHOCK)

UHH... ACTUALLY, I WAS IN THE BATH RIGHT DURING THE FIREWORKS...

GUH!? YOU MISSED THEM!?

YEAH. WHERE ELSE?

?

N-NO, RIGHT.

MY PLACE... SURE, SURE...

PHEW... SO SHE DIDN'T SPOT US.

LAST YEAR'S WERE ALREADY WILD, BUT THIS YEAR? BIGGER THAN EVER!

YOU DON'T SAY.

I WISH YOU COULD'VE BEEN THERE.

OH! I'VE GOT SOME PICS HERE— CHECK THEM OUT!

MIIIN (BUZZ)

MIIIN

JIII (BZ)

JI

JI

JI

...DO WRONG BY MIKO-CHAN AFTER ALL?

...DID I...

HMM... NAH, TOO BLURRY.

OH?

YOU WANT OUR ATTENDANCE AT THE FESTIVAL YESTERDAY...

...TO BE KEPT SECRET FROM HER?

MIIIN (BUZZ)

.....

YES. IF POSSIBLE.

.....

I'LL HAPPILY KEEP MY MOUTH SHUT, BUT...

...STEAL MY BESTIE!?

HRMPH...

GRRR...

MENTAL IMAGE

HOW DARE YOU!!

IF ANYTHING, SHE'D BARE HER FANGS AT ME.

...SHE HARDLY SEEMS THE TYPE TO LOSE HER HEAD OVER THIS.

.....IT'S NOT THAT SHE'D GET ANGRY...

.....

IF SHE FINDS OUT, IT MIGHT HURT HER.....

...I SEE.

JARI (SKRITCH)

...MUST BE FAIRLY PRECIOUS TO YOU.

...

MIKO YASHIRO ...

—AFTER THE ACCIDENT...

LOOK, IT'S THAT GIRL.

...EVERYONE TREATED ME WEIRD. NOT THAT I BLAME THEM.

THEY WERE ALWAYS SO CAREFUL AROUND ME, LIKE I'D SNAP IF THEY MADE THE WRONG MOVE.

I HEAR IT WAS A HORRIFIC SCENE.

THAT'S THE YAOTOSES' DAUGHTER, RIGHT?

HOW WILL HER PARENTS EVER REST IN PEACE...?

WHAT A YOUNG GIRL...

.....

GYU (GRIP)

POOR THING.

BUT...
HINAKO!
...MIKO-CHAN WASN'T LIKE THEM.
LET'S GET A MOVE ON! SCHOOL'S WAITING!
MORNIN'!

SHE TREATED ME EXACTLY THE SAME AS BEFORE...

...AND NEVER ONCE LEFT MY SIDE.

—SHE'S A KIND SOUL.

LIKE NO OTHER.

THE EVENTS OF LAST NIGHT WILL NOT CROSS MY LIPS.

VERY WELL.

I WILL RESPECT THE LOVE YOU HAVE FOR YOUR FRIEND.

...THANK YOU.

THAT DOESN'T SOUND QUITE RIGHT, BUT OKAY, SURE.

NIKOOO (SMILE)

WHAT'S YOURS IS MINE!

AFTER ALL, ANYONE DEAR TO MY HINAKO...

...IS A CLOSE FRIEND OF MINE!

MIIIN (BUZZZ)

WELL...

...I'LL BE OFF TO DUMP THE GARBAGE...

MIIIN

MIIIN

SPLENDID! YOU DO THAT.

OH!

ALLOW ME TO PUT AWAY THE BROOMS, THEN.

HUP!

'KAY.

I'LL LEAVE THAT TO YOU...

MIIIN

MIIIN

MIIIN

MIIIN

JI (BZ)

JI

JI

JI

JI

ZURURU (SHLURK)

GIRI (CLENCHD)

GOOD GRIEF.

ZURU

ZURU

DOSU (SKWLCH)

...I SUPPOSE COMMON VERMIN WITH NO INTELLECT OR REASON ...

GUSHA (CRNCH)

ZURU

I'D HOPED SLAYING THAT ISO-ONNA...

...WOULD PAY LITTLE HEED TO SUCH THINGS.

...WOULD ACT AS A DETERRENT FOR THE MONSTERS IN THE AREA, BUT...

...THOUGH, THIS IS BEYOND MY EXPECTA-TIONS.

TO THINK MONSTERS WOULD BE DRAWN TO HER TO THIS EXTENT...

ZU (SHUK)

IT'S A WONDER SHE'S SURVIVED SO LONG WITH ALL HER LIMBS INTACT.

WHOA!

GASHAN (FWUMP)

...OH DEAR.

MIIIN (BUZZ)

MIIIN

THIS TROUBLE-SOME GIRL HAS CAUGHT ME AT A MOST TROUBLESOME MOMENT—

PITA (FREEZ)

EWW...

WHAT THE HECK IS THIS STUFF!?

FEAR NOT.

MIIIN

MIIIN

MIIIN

MIIIN (BUZZ)

WE'RE BOTH KINDA COVERED IN BLOOD...

MIIIN

MONSTER BLOOD, YES, WHICH IS INVISIBLE TO ORDINARY HUMANS.

GUCHA (SPLURCH)

TSK, TSK.

GUCHI (SHLRK)

SERIOUSLY, WHAT'S YOUR DEAL?

WHO MAKES A GROSS MESS LIKE THIS DURING CLEANUP TIME?

ZAAAA (WHOOSH)

YOU'RE FREAKIN' UNBELIEVABLE, Y'KNOW!?

THIS IS SERIOUSLY THE WORST!

WE'VE GOTTA GET THIS TIDIED UP.

CHAPTER 7

.....

WHAT A SUR-PRISE.

ZAAAA (WHOOSH)

YOUR SCENT IS NEITHER DELICIOUS NOR FOUL.

BY ALL ACCOUNTS, YOU SMELL LIKE AN UTTERLY ORDINARY HUMAN, YET...

THAT NASTY MIX OF ASHY MUCK AND SALT WATER—

JUWA (SIZZ)

JUWA

—YEAH? WELL, I HAD YOU CLOCKED BY YOUR SCENT WITHIN THE FIRST MINUTE.

IT'S THE SMELL OF...

...A FLESH-EATING MONSTER.

CHAPTER 7

Memories of You by My Side

AH-HA! NOW I SEE...

MIIIN (BUZZ)

MIIIN

YOU'RE THE ONE WHO'S BEEN PROTECTING HINAKO ALL THIS TIME, AREN'T YOU?

.....

MIIIN

MIIIN

MIIIN

BINGO.

GUCHA (SKWLCH)

UNTIL NOW, I'VE BEEN HANDLING THE PESTS...

...WHO SEE HER AS NOTHING BUT A TASTY MEAT SACK.

AND THAT...

...WON'T CHANGE ANYTIME SOON.

BUCHI (KRNCH)

THOSE WHO DARE HURT HINAKO...

...ARE GONNA ANSWER TO ME.

ZU (ZRM)

PAKI (KRK)

.....

MY, HOW ADMIRABLE.

ZAAAA (SHWOOOO)

HUH?

GU (SKRCH)

BAKI (SHNK)

MIKO-CHAN?

PITA (FREEZE)

I DIDN'T THINK YOU WERE ON CLEANING DUTY TODAY.

—...

.....

PA (BEAM)

OH, NOPE!

I'M NOT!

I WAS WAITING FOR YOU TO FINISH UP, SILLY!

TA (TMP)

TA

UH...YEAH. PERFECT TIMING, ACTUALLY.

SO? ALL DONE HERE?

WELL...

...YOU KNOW THAT CAFÉ WE TRIED? THEY'VE GOT NEW GOODIES!

IN THAT CASE! LET'S HEAD HOME TOGETHER! I WANNA GO SOMEWHERE WITH YOU!

WHERE TO?

...

UH.

S-SURE...

CHIRA (PEEK)

GUI (TUG)

YOUR BAG'S IN THE CLASS-ROOM, YEAH?

LET'S GO GRAB IT!

GUI

NIKO (SMILE)

...YEAH.

SEE YOU TOMOR-ROW...

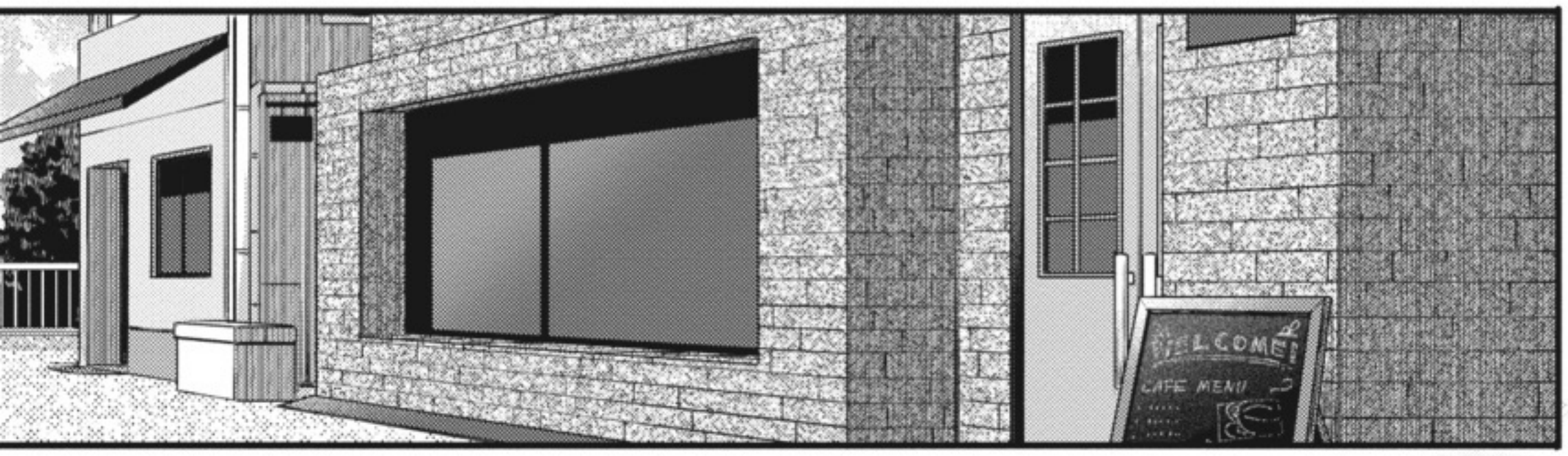
CAREFUL ON YOUR WAY.

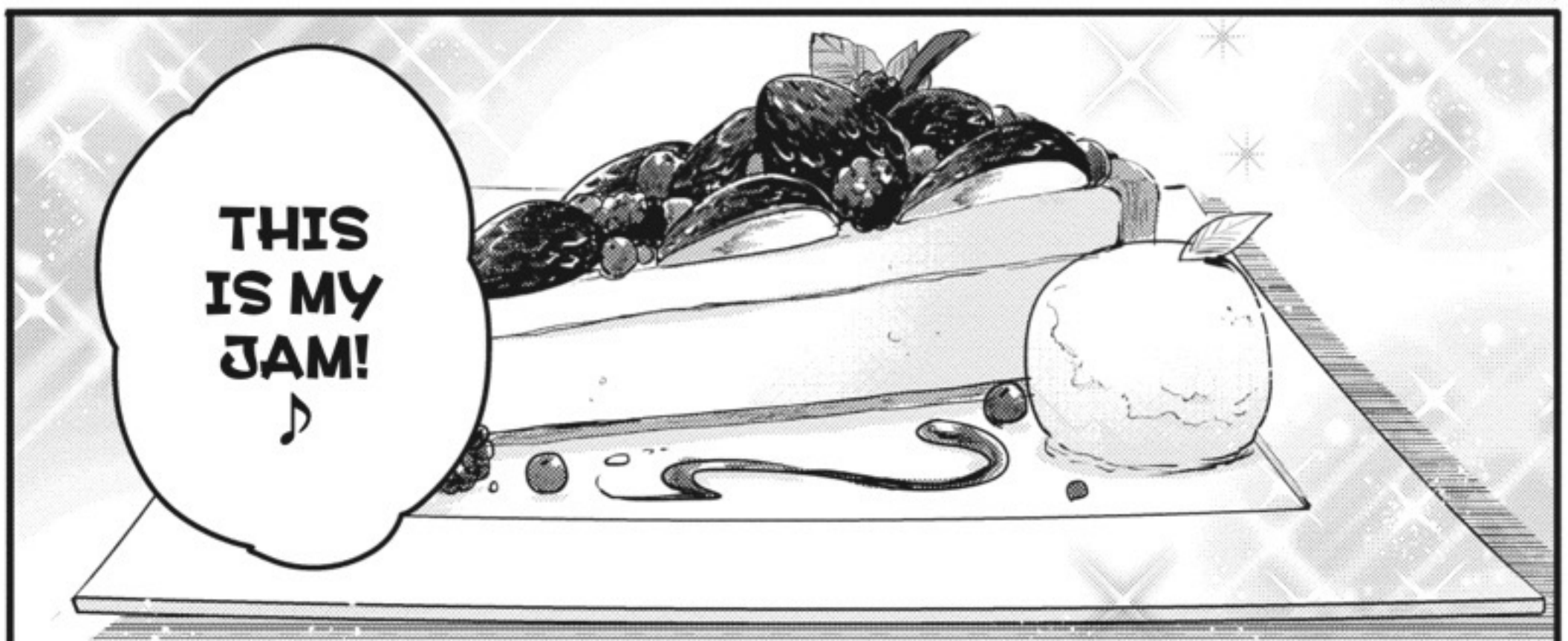
.....NOW, THEN.

MIIIN (BUZZ)

MIIIN

WHAT TO DO ABOUT HER?





.....

HEY, MIKO-CHAN...

HMM?

UGH, C'MON, FOCUS...

.....

TOTALLY DYING OVER HOW YUMMY THIS LOOKS!

PHOTO TIIME!

LIKE A FIGHT, OR...

HMM? LIKE WHAT?

...DID SOMETHING HAPPEN BETWEEN YOU AND SHIORI-SAN?

...AND THE THING IS...

...ME AND THAT TRANSFER CHICK AREN'T REALLY BUDDY-BUDDY, IF YOU GET MY DRIFT?

...THEY SAY FIGHTING'S A SIGN OF HOW CLOSE YOU ARE...

HAAAAH...

HINAKO, GIRL...

DOESN'T SEEM LIKE SHE ASKED SHIORI-SAN ABOUT YESTERDAY...

'KAY...

THIS IS BLOWING MY MIND! YOU ABSOLUTELY HAVE TO TASTE IT, HINAKO!

.....! UM? YUM!!

PAKU (CHOMP)

PEKAAA (SPARKLE)

!!

OH...

YOU WEREN'T KIDDING. IT'S GOOD...

RIGHT? RIGHT!?

MOGU

MOGU (NOM)

HMM?

NIKO (SMILED)
にっこ

NIKO
にっこ

...WHAT'S UP?

?

I'M JUST SAVORING THE TASTY LOOK ON YOUR FACE.

DON'T MIND ME.

HUH?

THAT'S ODD...

I COULD'VE SWORN A GIRL WALKED IN...

UH-OH, NOYAMA-SENSEI!

AH HA HA!

DID ANY STUDENTS COME IN HERE?

HMM?

NO, I HAVEN'T SEEN ANYONE...

YOU MIGHT BE SEEING GHOSTS!

SFX: BUBUUU (BZZT)

WHAT A HASSLE...

WERE IT DIGITAL, I WOULD FIRST HAVE TO LEARN THE PROPER HANDLING OF THOSE CURSED MACHINES...

STUDENT ROSTER

THANK GOODNESS THEY USE A PHYSICAL BOOK FOR THIS.

NOW, THEN...

PARA (FLIP)

YASHIRO... YASHIRO...

AH, SHE WOULD COME AFTER HINAKO, I SUPPOSE.

Yaotose, Hinako

Birth Date

Address

PARA

PARA

PARA

HINAKO CLAIMS THEY'VE BEEN FRIENDS FOR AGES...

.....

PATAN (FWAP)

WELL, WELL, WELL...

STUDENT

HOW AMAZING WAS THAT CAKE!?

I WANNA EAT, LIKE, FIVE MORE OF THOSE WHILE WE HAVE THE CHANCE.

THEY'RE ONLY SERVING IT FOR A LIMITED TIME! GOTTA STUFF MY FACE BEFORE IT'S GONE FOREVER!

GOT TONS OF CUTE PICS TOO!

THAT MANY...?

MAYBE A LITTLE PLUMP ON THE UPPER ARMS...

.....

LIKE... ONLY THE TIIINIEST BIT...

...IS IT JUST ME, OR ARE YOU LOOKING ROUNDER, MIKO-CHAN?

NO WAY!!

NUH-UH... IT'S FINE! I ALWAYS MAKE SURE TO GET IN EXERCISE ON DAYS WHEN SUGAR'S ON THE MENU!

GAAAN (SHOCK)

HEH HEH!

—...

SORRY.

JUST TEASING YOU.

NOW I'M IN A FUNK!

YOU BETTER MAKE IT UP TO ME WITH A TREAT FROM THE CORNER STORE!

UH... MORE FOOD?

ZAZA (FSSSH)

UNBELIEVABLE!!

YOU MEANIE!

I'VE BEEN FEELING INSECURE ABOUT IT LATELY!

HEY, I SAID I'M SORRY.

HUH?

SHIORI-SAN?

?

WHAT'RE YOU DOING...

...ALL THE WAY OUT HERE.....?

WHAT'S WRONG, MIKO-CHAN...?

HINAKO.

...?

WHAT DO YOU—

HINAKO.

NIKO (SMILE)

NIKO

NIKO

GET BEHIND ME, WON'T YOU?

.....!

NOW.

STEP AWAY FROM THAT THING.

FWOO...

MUST YOU FORCE MY HAND...?

ZA

ZAZA

ZAZAN (FSSH)

STUDENT ROSTER

"MIKO YASHI-RO."

IS THIS GIRL TRULY...

...TRY THINKING BACK FOR ME.

STUDENT ROSTER

HINAKO, IF YOU WOULD...

...YOUR FRIEND?

CERTIFIED
LUDDITE
……
Q

This Monster Wants to Eat Me

CHAPTER
8

WAAH...

WAAH...

MOMMY...

DADDY...

ONII-CHAN...

WHERE ARE YOU...?

!

ベしょっ

BESHO (THWUMP)

ガクン

GAKUN (TRIP)

STOP IT...

.....

DON'T LEAVE ME ALL ALONE...

NGH...

じわ…

JIWA (DRIP)

HIC...

SNIFF!

!

HINAKO.

DON'T CRY.

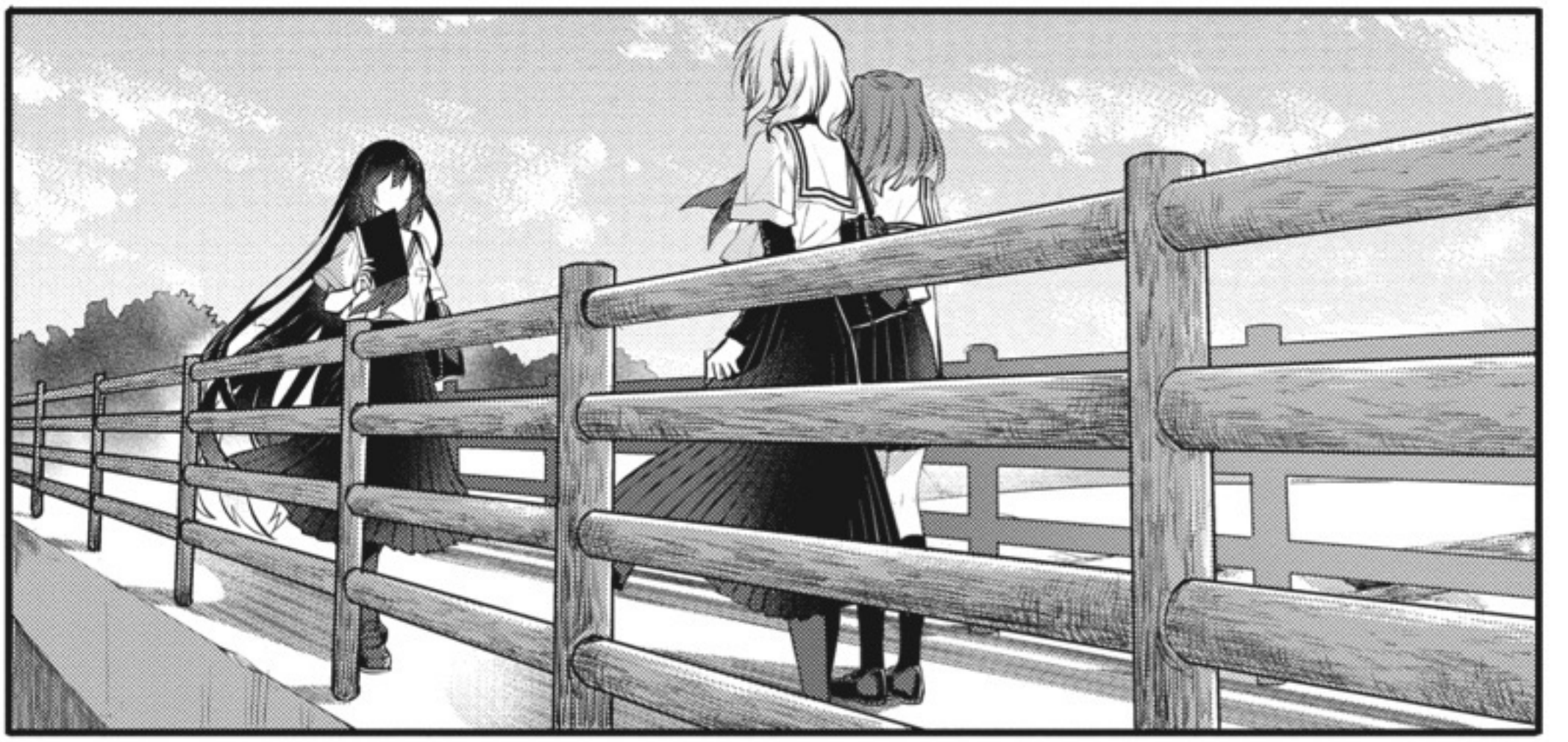
YOU HAVE ME.

I'M HERE FOR YOU...

...AND ONLY YOU.

I'LL PROTECT YOU.

CHAPTER
8
EPHEMERAL BOND



.....
SHIORI-SAN...
...WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THAT?

I MEAN IT QUITE LITERALLY.

I WANT YOU TO THINK BACK AND TRY TO REMEMBER.

IS "MIKO YASHIRO" TRULY A FRIEND YOU'VE HAD FOR YEARS AND YEARS?

REMEM-BER...?

I TOLD YOU ALREADY.

...WE'VE BEEN FRIENDS SINCE WE WERE LITTLE.

WE WERE TOGETHER IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, MIDDLE SCHOOL—

THEN, HAVE YOU EVER PAID A VISIT TO HER HOME?

HUH ...?

PISHI (KRIK)

HAVE YOU EVER MET HER PARENTS?

KOTSU (CLACK)

...WAIT, WHAT?

.....?

WELL ...

DOES SHE HAVE SIBLINGS? WHAT'S HER HOME PHONE NUMBER?

I, UM...

I WONDER WHY...

WHERE EXACTLY DOES SHE LIVE?

WE'VE SPENT SO MUCH OF OUR LIVES TOGETHER, BUT...

...FOR SOME REA-SON...

...I CAN'T RECALL A SINGLE MEMORY INVOLVING HER.

HINAKO...

—EVEN SO...

...MIKO-CHAN...

...IS STILL MY...!

GYU (CLENCH)

.....

PARA (FLIP)

YOU'RE HOPELESS. FINE.

HOW DO YOU THINK MY KIND INFILTRATE HUMAN SOCIETY?

HUH ...?

PARA (FLIP)

TELL ME.

HOW YOU... DO IT?

WHAT'S THIS ABOUT?

PARA

?

IT'S SUCH A CHORE, REALLY!

FEELS LIKE I'VE HEARD THIS BEFORE...

ZAZAN (FSSSH)

IN OLDEN TIMES, WE'D CLAIM TO BE TRAVELERS OR WANDERERS AND NO ONE BATTED AN EYE, BUT...

...IT'S HARDLY THAT SIMPLE NOWADAYS.

...

HMM...

I DON'T SEE YOUR POINT.

EVERY HUMAN HAS A GOVERNMENTAL REGISTRY, AN ADDRESS, FORMS OF IDENTIFICATION, ALL OF WHICH ARE DIFFICULT TO FAKE...

ZAZA

...THAT PAGE FROM THE STUDENT ROSTER...

...IS MIKO-CHAN'S, ISN'T IT...?

Name

Yashiro, Miko

Birth Date

2 00

Address

Ethn

THAT'S WHERE...

...OUR MAGIC COMES IN.

DORO (GLOOM)

Yashiro, Miko

WHAT'S THE POINT OF—

!?

BORO (CHF)

ZUZU (ZRM)

...AND IMBUE A CHARM IN OUR SPEECH...

...TO MANIPULATE HUMANS' SENSES AND MEMORIES.

WE WRITE IN MAGIC LETTERS...

THAT IS HOW WE MONSTERS OPERATE.

THEN WE ASSUME A HUMANOID FORM THAT IS UNIQUE BUT NOT UNCANNY ENOUGH TO STAND OUT...

...WORMING OUR WAY INTO YOUR LIVES AS SEEMINGLY HARMLESS FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS.

HINAKO.

HI

NA

KO

HINAKO!

MIKO-
CHAN...

...TELL ME, EVERYTHING SHIORI-SAN SAID...

...WAS A JOKE, RIGHT?

HMPH.

HOW VEXING.

—MIKO-CHAN'S ALWAYS BEEN THERE FOR ME.

SHE'S MY ONLY—

HEY.

MIKO-CHAN...

DUH! OBVIOUSLY SHE'S FULL OF CRAP!!

THIS IS SERIOUSLY THE WORST.

DO (BWOOM)

WH-WHAT THE...?

AN EXPLOSION... RIGHT WHERE SHIORI-SAN WAS STANDING?

!

OH, IT'S YOU...

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

...ALTHOUGH SHE DOES SEEM QUITE ENRAGED.

I WOULD IMAGINE SHE'S UN-HARMED ...

...WHAT ABOUT MIKO-CHAN?

YEAH, I'M FINE... BUT...

WAS THAT... A HUGE SHADOW JUST NOW...?

I WON'T FORGIVE YOU...

ZURU (SWIFF)

HINA-KO.

STAY CLOSE TO ME...

—IS WHAT I WOULD LIKE TO SAY...

...BUT IN THIS CASE, IT MAY BE WISE TO PUT SOME DISTANCE BETWEEN US.

...?

I'LL NEVER FORGIVE YOU...

I WON'T.

I WON'T, I WON'T.

I WON'T, I WON'T, I WON'T, I WON'T.

MIKO-CHAN...?

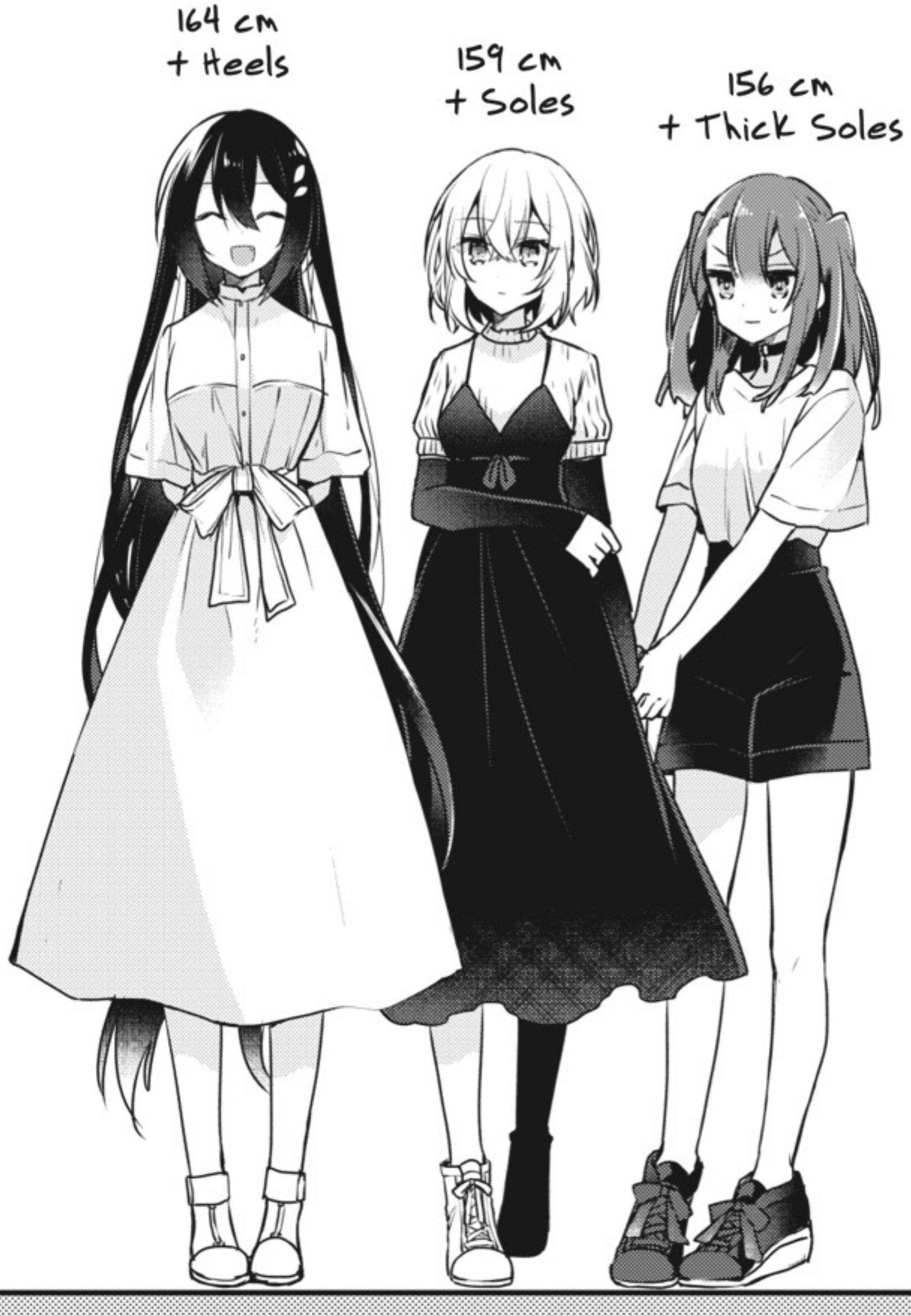
...YOU SOGGY, SALT-STINKING SEA SCUM.

NOT EVEN AFTER...

...I RIP YOU INTO A THOUSAND BLOODY CHUNKS.

WHATEVER WAS THE FATE OF THE STUDENT ROSTER? NONE CAN SAY...
STUDENT ROSTER

HEIGHT COMPARISON



CHAPTER 9

What Remains of a Prayer Is a Promise

YOU CAN TAKE THE DAY OFF IF IT'S STILL TOO HARD.

...I'M OKAY.

THERE'S NO NEED TO FORCE YOURSELF TO GO...

I FEEL FINE. DON'T WORRY.

YOU HAVE YOUR OWN WORK TO DO, AUNTIE.

HMM...? WHO COULD IT BE AT THIS HOUR?

COMING!

ピンポーン

PINPOOON (DING-DOOONG)

BUT, HINAKO-CHAN—

GOOD MORNING!

AND WHO MIGHT YOU BE?

GARA (CLATTER)

ガラ

GARA

ガラ

NIKO (SMILE)

GOOD MORNING...

NIKO

...ARE YOU A FRIEND OF HINAKO-CHAN'S?

YEAH! I'M MIKO YASHIRO!

I'M HERE TO PICK UP HINAKO!

PYOKO (POING)

ぴょこっ

HINAKO!

...KIND TO ME EVER SINCE WE WERE LITTLE...

...SMILING THROUGH EVERY-THING...

...AND ALWAYS BY MY SIDE.

—SHE WAS...

MIKO-
CHAN...

THE...

FRIEND I HELD SO DEAR...

MY...
DEAR—

PARA

PARA (FLAP)

.....! SHIORI-SAN!

TA (TMP)

SHE'S INTENT TO KEEP ME AWAY FROM THE WATER'S EDGE?

GUI (WIPE)

NOT VERY FAIR OF YOU, IS IT...?

ZURU
(ZHOOM)

……!

THIS COULD GET HAIRY.

...

STAY RIGHT THERE.

ZURURI

...HUH?

—…

MIKO-CHAN…

ZAZA (FSSH)

ZA

ZA

ARE YOU A YAKO FOX? PERHAPS A KUUKO?

FOR A BEAST, YOU CERTAINLY ARE CHUMMY WITH THE HUMANS.

TON (TNK)

...A WASHED-UP LOCAL DEITY OR THE LIKE?

...

THEIR SCENT IS SO DEEPLY INGRAINED IN YOU, I SUPPOSE YOU MUST BE...

RIGHT.

WELL...

PAKI (KRK)

PAKI

WHY SHOULD I TELL YOU? IT'S NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS.

YOU NASTY BEAST...

...A MONSTER, I WOULD DEVOUR ON THE SPOT WITHOUT CEREMONY.

BUT A DEITY... I'D AT LEAST PAY MY RESPECTS BEFORE MAKING A MEAL OF HER.

IT TAKES ONE TO KNOW ONE.

TO (-TNK)

ZAN (SLASH)

GARA

ALAS, WHILE WEARING THIS HUMANOID FORM, MY CUTS ARE QUITE SHALLOW.

GARA (CRUMBLE)

IF ONLY I COULD LEAD HER TO THE WATER—

SHIORI-SAN...!

.....!

BOTH OF YOU... WAIT A MINUTE...

I SWEAR...

...YOU REALLY MUST GIVE US SOME ROOM.

GOODNESS, SEE, YOU'RE HURT...! STRAY RUBBLE IS NO LAUGHING MATTER.

BUT...

TA (TMP)

TA

SHALL WE CALL A TIME-OUT?

PIKU (TWITCH)

HINAKO...

ZOWA (SHUDDER)

DOSA (WHUNK)

KOFF! KOFF!

KOFF! KOFF!

...MIKO-CHAN?

KOFF!

KOFF! KOFF!

...WHY RETURN TO HUMAN FORM...?

WHAT'S WRONG?

A-ARE YOU OKAY?

GUI (PULL)

!?

I TOLD YOU TO STAY BACK.

BUT...

...SHE LOOKS SO PAINED...

SO FOND OF IFS, ANDS, AND BUTS, AREN'T YOU?

IF YOU GET TOO CLOSE, YOU'LL ONLY CAUSE HER GREATER PAIN.

.....

HOW SO.....?

IT'S ADMIRABLE, REALLY—THE WAY YOU REVERT TO HUMAN FORM TO SUPPRESS YOUR CARNIVOROUS IMPULSES.

!

BUT THE TRUTH IS...YOU CAN'T HELP BUT CRAVE HINAKO'S FLESH, CAN YOU?

ZAZAN (FSSH)

NO MATTER HOW MUCH YOU WHINE ABOUT PROTECTING HER...

...YOU'RE STILL THE SAME AS ALL THE RIFFRAFF.

ZAZA

.....!

YOU'RE JUST ANOTHER MONSTER, THIRSTING FOR HER BLOOD.

I HAVEN'T THE FAINTEST IDEA OF YOUR MOTIVES OR EXPERIENCES LIVING IN THIS LAND, BUT FOR...

...A FLESH-EATING MONSTER TO GO WITHOUT FOOD FOR SO LONG HER OWN SCENT FADES AWAY?

WELL, YOU MUST BE QUITE THE MASOCHIST.

AH-HA!

PERHAPS YOU'RE CULTIVATING HINAKO UNTIL SHE'S RIPE AND DELICIOUS, LIKE ME?

IF THAT'S THE CASE, WE MIGHT SEE EYE TO EYE.

.....SHUT IT.

IT MUST BE SO VERY PAINFUL, THOUGH...

...TO REMAIN BY HINAKO'S SIDE WHEN YOU HAVEN'T HAD A GOOD MEAL IN AGES.

I SAID, SHUT IT...!!

NO GYM CLASS FOR ME TODAY. I'M NOT FEELING SO HOT...

HORK...

GO (LOOM)
GO GO GO GO GO GO
ゴゴゴゴゴゴゴ

NYU (POKE)

FINE. GET YOUR ASS TO THE NURSE'S OFFICE.

THIS WHOLE TIME...

Miko

Shoot, I got a fever! Might stay home tomorrow, sorry

I'll text you tomorrow morning
Sorry again

Take care

Yeah, I'm sick
Go ahead w/o me

Were you okay alone?
reful on the way

owwy

...MIKO-CHAN'S CONSTANT HEALTH ISSUES WERE...

KOFU

KOFU

...MY FAULT .....?

YOU CAN REST EASY.

KATSU

BAKI (SNAP)

FROM NOW ON, I'LL TAKE UP YOUR MANTLE...

...STAYING BY HINAKO'S SIDE AND PROTECTING HER IN YOUR STEAD.

KATSU

KATSU (KLIK)

IT'S A SHAME YOU'LL NEVER GET TO ENJOY HER IN HER PRIME.

—!

GIRI (SKRCH)

...I CAN'T LET YOU HAVE HER.

I MUST KEEP HER SAFE...

...IN DAICHI, YURI...

...AND MUTSUKI'S PLACE.....

I MUST KEEP THAT PROMISE— NO MATTER WHAT...!!

WHY'S SHE...

...BRINGING UP MY FAMILY...?

HUH ......?

AND WHAT'S THIS ABOUT A PROMISE ...?

LET ME TELL YOU ABOUT ____-SAMA.

IT'S BEEN HERE, PROTECTING THIS LAND, SINCE BEFORE MOMMY AND DADDY WERE BORN.

I'VE GOT A SOCCER GAME TOMORROW! GOTTA VISIT THE SHRINE FOR GOOD LUCK!

Y'KNOW, YOUR DADDY EVEN PRAYED HERE FOR THE COURAGE TO PROPOSE...

OH, I HAVE AN IDEA...THIS'LL BE A LONG TRIP, SO BEFORE WE HEAD OFF...

...HOW ABOUT WE PRAY TO ____-SAMA FOR SAFETY ON THE ROAD?

THAT FATEFUL DAY...

...WE ALL MADE A PRAYER THAT WENT UN-ANSWERED—

OKITSUNE-SAMA...?

To Be Continued in Volume 3

Translation Notes

GENERAL

-san: The Japanese equivalent of Mr./Mrs./Miss. If a situation calls for politeness, this is the fail-safe honorific.

-kun: Used most often when referring to boys, this indicates affection or familiarity. Occasionally used by older men among their peers, but it may also be used by anyone referring to a person of lower standing.

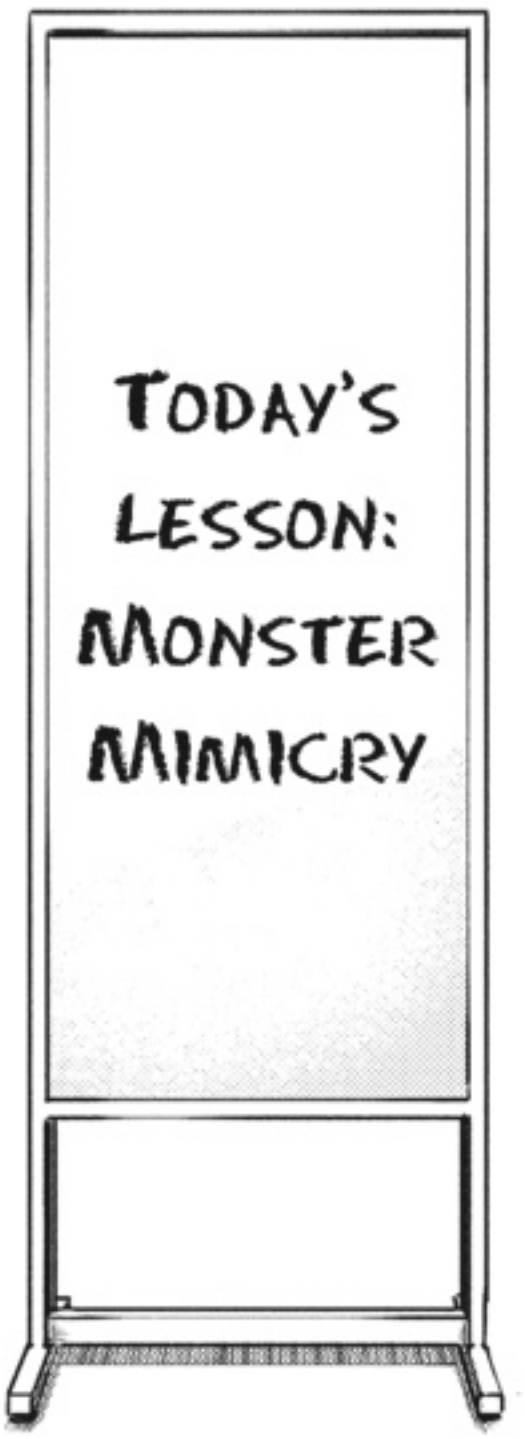
-chan: An affectionate honorific indicating familiarity used mostly in reference to girls; also used in reference to cute persons or animals regardless of gender.

Page 133

Yako and *Kuuko* are two types of fox *yokai* in Japanese legend. *Yako* are small foxes that possess victims, while *Kuuko* are divine foxes that some sources say have lived for over three thousand years.

Page 152

Okitsune-sama roughly translates to "Lord Great Fox." *-sama* is an honorific used to convey the utmost respect for the subject, while prepending *o-* to the word *kitsune* (fox) adds another layer of politeness.


TODAY'S
LESSON:
MONSTER
MIMICRY

MONSTER... MIMICRY?

IS IT A THING FOR YOU?

...WHY'D YOU CHOOSE THIS ONE?

HMM...

NOT REALLY.

CORRECT.

SO YOU CREATED YOUR CURRENT FORM, SHIORI-SAN?

THIS FIGURE IS MORE WELL-RECEIVED THAN ANY OTHER, BY ALL AGE AND GENDER DEMOGRAPHICS.

IT IS, HUH...?

...I CAN ALSO ALTER MYSELF TO SUIT YOUR TASTES, HINAKO.

M-MY TASTES...?

OH, BUT...

GOKUN (GULP)

FOR INSTANCE —

GOKI (KRAK)

"KRAK" ...?

TEACHER STYLE

MEKI (RIP)

MEKI

BAKI (SNAP)

I CAN LOOK LIKE THIS IF YOU PREFER MORE MATURE WOMEN...

GOKIN

OR PERHAPS ...

...

SO SHOCKED BY THE TRANSFORMATION PROCESS THAT THE REPULSION IS OVERPOWERING ANY FEELINGS ABOUT THE NEW LOOK ITSELF

NONE

APPETITE GAUGE

STARVING

BAKI

BAKI

BAKI

...THIS MIGHT BE MORE YOUR SPEED, SO TO SPEAK?

WELL? I COULD GO EVEN YOUNGER, IF YOU LIKE.

THOUGH I PREFER TO REMAIN A SIZE IN WHICH I COULD STILL LEAP INTO ACTION, SHOULD THE NEED ARISE.

LI'L SISTER MODE

GISHI (CREAK)

THAT...

...BEING SAID...

...I CAN TAKE ON ANY APPEARANCE YOU DESIRE.

WHAT'LL IT BE?

.....

ANY-THING I DESIRE...

DEFAULT, AND KEEP IT THAT WAY.

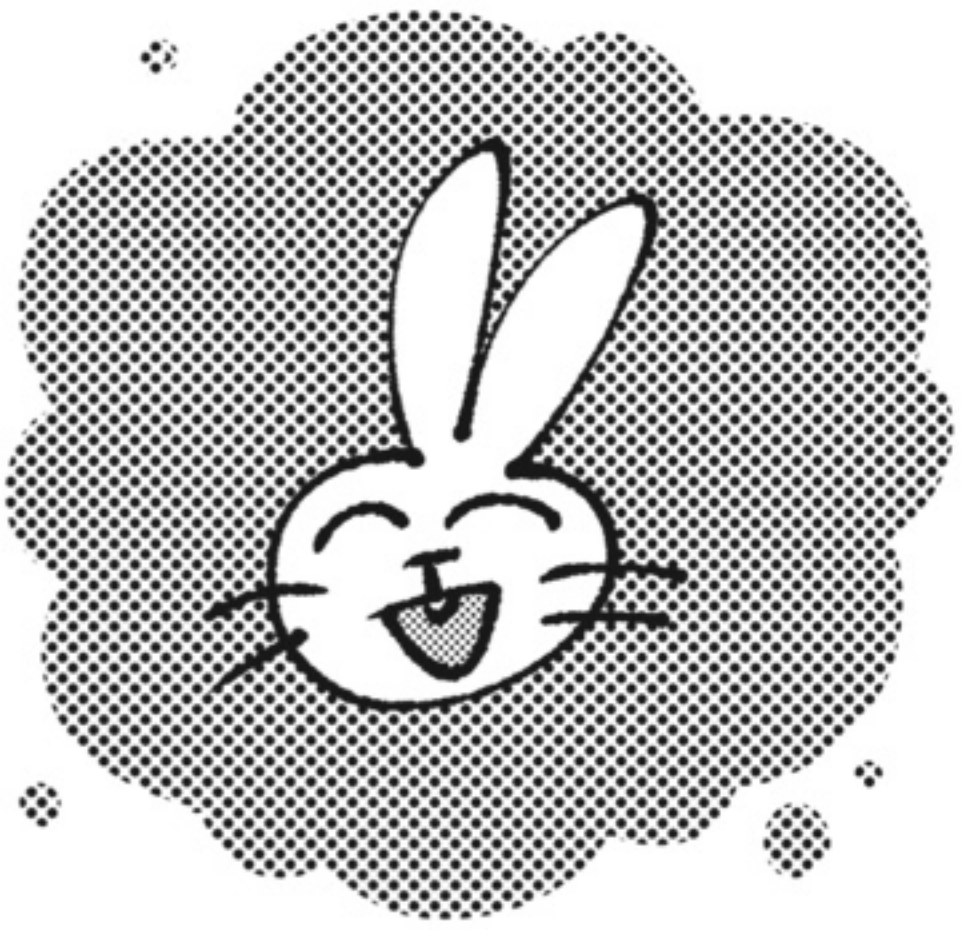
TRANSLATION: PLEASE NO MORE TRANSFORMATION SEQUENCES.

THOUGHT SO!

GOKIN (KAKRAK)

TRANSLATION: THOUGHT SO! ♥

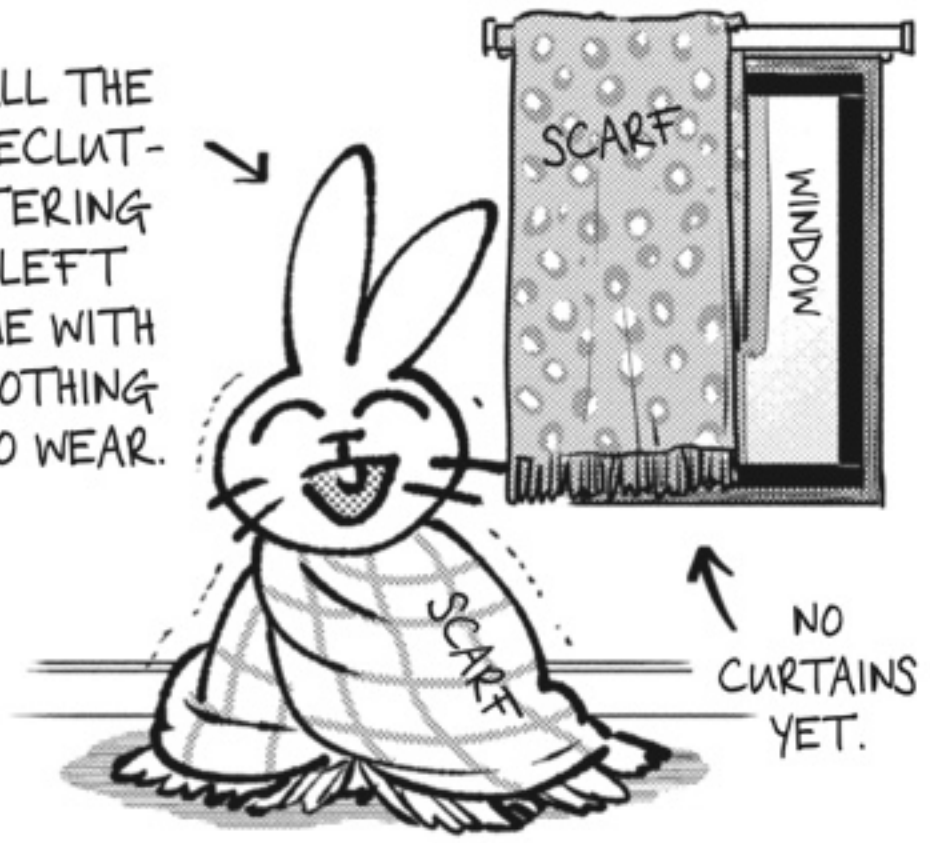
I FEEL LIKE IT WAS JUST YESTERDAY THAT I WAS JUMPING FOR JOY OVER THE RELEASE OF VOLUME 1. TIME'S SWIFT FLOW IS A HARSH MISTRESS INDEED.



THANK YOU FOR PICKING UP VOLUME 2 OF MONSTEAT!

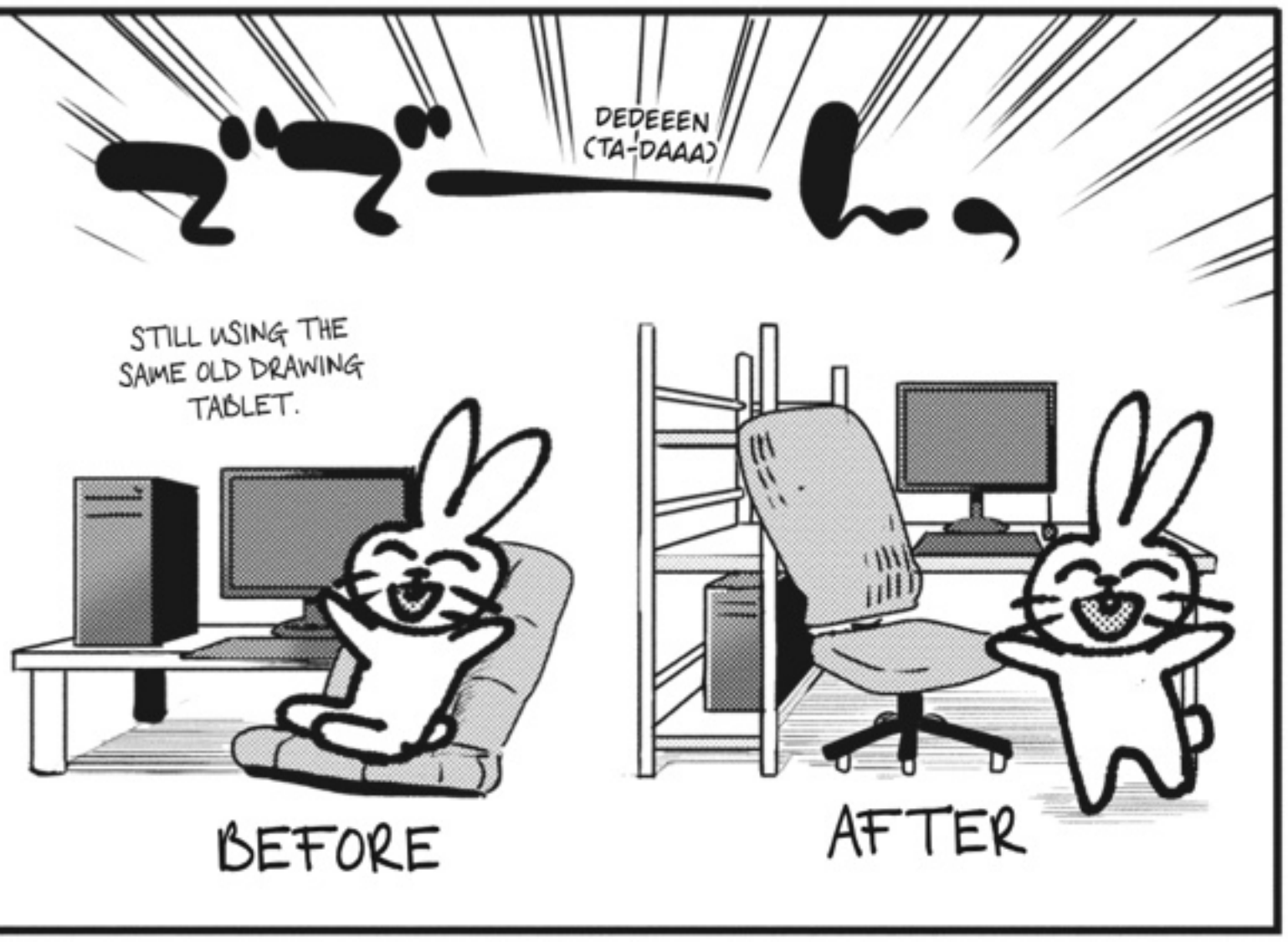
AND HERE'S THE RESULT!

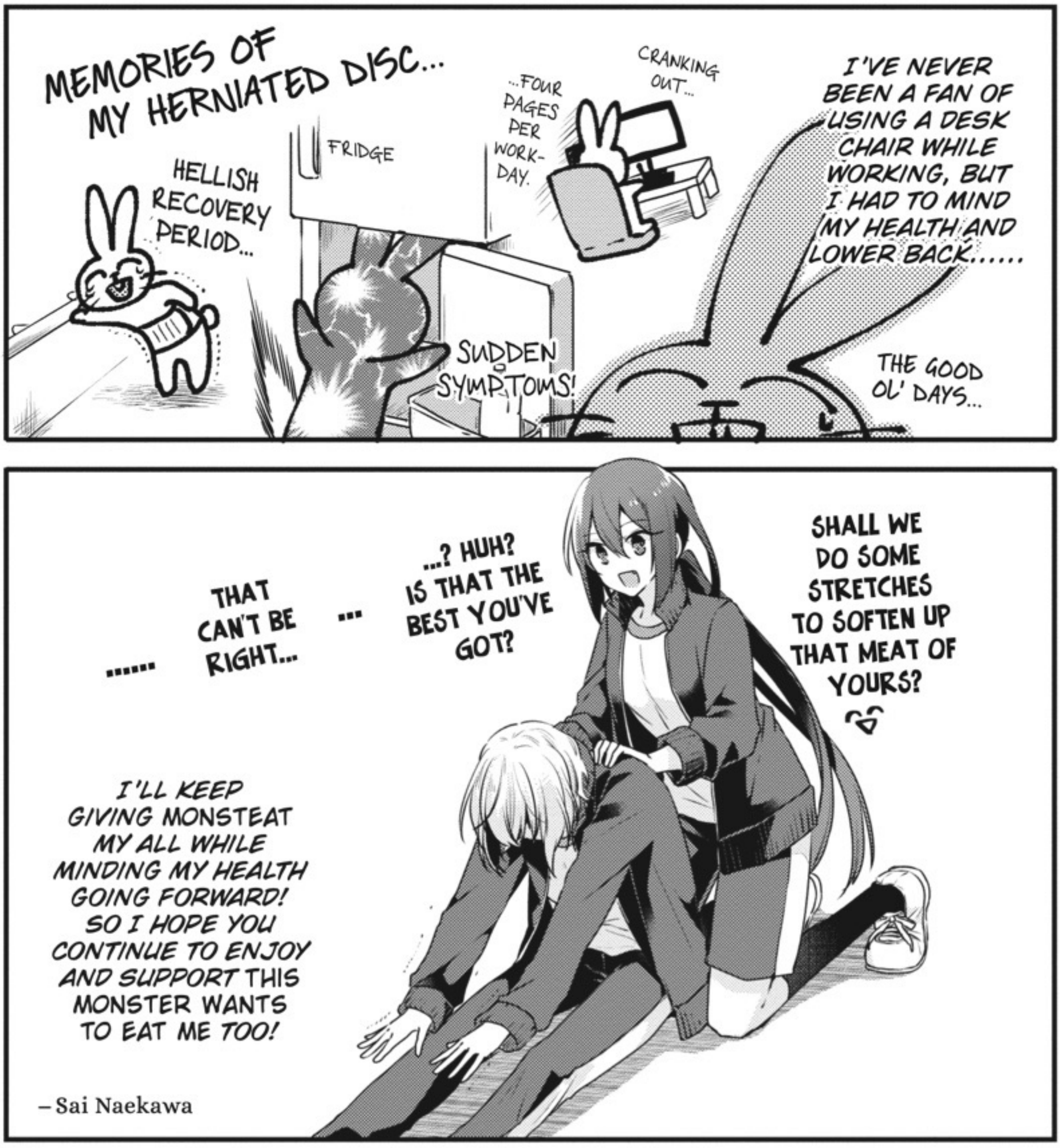
ALL THE DECLUT-TERING LEFT ME WITH NOTHING TO WEAR.



DURING THE PRODUCTION OF VOLUME 2, I MOVED.

AT LONG, LONG LAST, MY WORK SETUP HAS EVOLVED FROM A LOW TABLE (CHEAP) + FLOOR-CUSHION SEAT (CHEAP) TO A PROPER DESK (REASONABLE) + DESK CHAIR (KIND OF PRICEY)! WHOO-HOO!!




MEMORIES OF MY HERNIATED DISC...
HELLISH RECOVERY PERIOD...
FRIDGE
SUDDEN SYMPTOMS!
...FOUR PAGES PER WORK-DAY.
CRANKING OUT...
I'VE NEVER BEEN A FAN OF USING A DESK CHAIR WHILE WORKING, BUT I HAD TO MIND MY HEALTH AND LOWER BACK.....
THE GOOD OL' DAYS...
.....
THAT CAN'T BE RIGHT...
...
...? HUH? IS THAT THE BEST YOU'VE GOT?
SHALL WE DO SOME STRETCHES TO SOFTEN UP THAT MEAT OF YOURS?
I'LL KEEP GIVING MONSTEAT MY ALL WHILE MINDING MY HEALTH GOING FORWARD! SO I HOPE YOU CONTINUE TO ENJOY AND SUPPORT THIS MONSTER WANTS TO EAT ME TOO!
– Sai Naekawa

SPECIAL THANKS!!

· KAMEMARU-SAN, MY EDITOR · MY DESIGNER, SALIDAS CO.'S SHOJI-SAN · EHIME PREFECTURE'S IYO AGRICULTURAL HIGH SCHOOL, FOR PROVIDING VISUAL REFERENCE FOR THE SCHOOL · SHINO-SENSEI · MY FRIENDS · MY FAMILY · YOU READERS!

This Monster Wants to Eat Me 2

Sai Naekawa

Translation:
CALEB COOK

Lettering:
BIANCA PISTILLO

This book is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents are the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual events, locales, or persons, living or dead, is coincidental.

WATASHI O TABETAI, HITODENASHI Vol.2
©Sai Naekawa 2021
First published in Japan in 2021 by KADOKAWA CORPORATION, Tokyo.
English translation rights arranged with KADOKAWA CORPORATION, Tokyo through TUTTLE-MORI AGENCY, INC., Tokyo.

English translation © 2024 by Yen Press, LLC

Yen Press, LLC supports the right to free expression and the value of copyright. The purpose of copyright is to encourage writers and artists to produce the creative works that enrich our culture.

The scanning, uploading, and distribution of this book without permission is a theft of the author's intellectual property. If you would like permission to use material from the book (other than for review purposes), please contact the publisher. Thank you for your support of the author's rights.

Yen Press
150 West 30th Street, 19th Floor
New York, NY 10001

Visit us at yenpress.com
facebook.com/yenpress
twitter.com/yenpress
yenpress.tumblr.com
instagram.com/yenpress

First Yen Press Edition: September 2024
Edited by Yen Press Editorial: Fortune Soleil, Danielle Niederkorn
Designed by Yen Press Design: Wendy Chan

Yen Press is an imprint of Yen Press, LLC.
The Yen Press name and logo are trademarks of Yen Press, LLC.

The publisher is not responsible for websites (or their content) that are not owned by the publisher.

Library of Congress Control Number: 2024933529

ISBNs: 978-1-9753-9050-1 (paperback)
978-1-9753-9051-8 (ebook)

$PrintCode

LSC-C

Printed in the United States of America